

Virginia State Coordination Grant: Implementation Grant
Department of Rail and Public Transportation

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Specialized Transportation Commission and the Interagency Transportation Council identified the 2005 Action Plan to improve and expand the coordination of human service transportation through a process of internal deliberations including consumer representation, the drafting of the UWR Framework for Action (Self Assessment)/state interagency agreement, and technical assistance from the Easter Seals Project ACTION. (See Appendix 1). The needed action steps were incorporated into the 2005 United We Ride (UWR) State Coordination Grant efforts.

The primary actions of the 2005 Action Plan and grant activities included three important goals for the Commonwealth:

1. Formalizing and strengthening collaboration across state agencies and stakeholders,
2. Collecting baseline data on the state of Virginia's human service transportation system and existing coordination efforts, and finally,
3. Analyzing and reducing statewide baseline data into useable local/regional segments.

The 2005 Coordination Grant activities confirmed that, as seen nationally, the Commonwealth has multiple public and private agencies that provide human service transportation in any one Virginia community. It further shows that services are often redundant but can vary greatly in terms of eligibility requirements, fees or fare policies, hours or scope of operation, specific destinations and quality. These findings reinforce Commonwealth's need for full commitment to more effective human service agency coordination that will ensure better services to more people.

This proposal represents Virginia's request for a UWR *Implementation Grant* that will allow the Commonwealth to widely disseminate the baseline findings from our first year coordination

grant, to demonstrate and replicate successful local/regional models, and to evolve the State Action Plan to include regulatory and legislation changes. This *Implementation Grant proposal* outlines the Commonwealth's strategic plans to enhance further evolution of a more comprehensive State Action Plan and to implement key elements within the Plan consistent with the UWR Framework for Action. All activities outlined herein are fully in line with the Coordinating Council's on Access and Mobility (CCAM's) recommendations to the President.

Narrative

Background: The State's mission as it relates to the coordination of human service transportation parallels that of the CCAM, that is, Virginia wish to strengthen existing transportation services to be more cost effective and accountable and help providers become more responsive to consumers through coordination. The Commonwealth's Specialized Transportation Commission and the Interagency Transportation Council, in part from the Self Assessment process, has realized that multiple public and private agencies provide human service transportation in any one Virginia community, and the most effective way to bring about meaningful coordination within the state is to drill down to the local level, to illuminate the redundant services, and to encourage local and regional coordination planning.

This year's Implementation Grant will build on the first year (UWR) grant, which was aimed at retrieving and organizing factual *ammunition* to propel local/regional transportation coordination planning to a high priority in each community throughout the state.

Virginia's 2005 UWR grant allowed the DRPT to conduct a baseline Inventory of the present human service transportation systems in Virginia by following existing funding streams, to determine the availability of "funded services" within a given community, the capacity within that system of transportation (vehicles and equipment), the eligibility requirements, and

operating polices (including fee or fare structures, if any). To obtain full cooperation from respondents and enhance interest across the state, DRPT communicated aggressively and effectively with state agencies and all other partners involved (e.g., providers, consumers, private for profit, non-profit organizations, and government). The initiative also was described and discussed at two Virginia Board for People Disabilities Board meetings and at a major statewide self-advocacy conference held in Richmond at which DRPT and staff from the Easter Seals Project ACTION presented jointly. Multiple presentations regarding the Initiative were also conducted throughout the spring and summer with regional human service groups and associations to build cooperation and commitment.

The Inventory was forwarded to four types of agencies under a cover letter from the Commissioners of each Agency during the late summer of 2005. Respondents included:

- 40 Community Services Boards (CSBs)/Behavioral Health Authorities,
- 25 Area Agencies on Aging,
- 50 Employment Support Organizations (funded by the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), and
- 50 Public Transit Authorities.
- Note: DRPT has also communicated with the Department of Social Services and the State's Medicaid agency to gain access to information about low income transportation users.

The DRPT is now organizing the 2005 findings into a database with which it can track and analyze costs within each system in order to improve efficiency, resource planning and distribution in the future. Most importantly, the inventory was aimed at retrieving information about each community's current human service transportation *coordination efforts*, if any, and the barriers to coordination as well as factors that may have contributed to successful coordination in each community. Preliminary review of the baseline data on coordination activities show that it will be particularly helpful as the Commonwealth attempts to advance coordination planning within the State's Framework for Action. The baseline will also provide

the DRPT and other state agencies with information that will help maximize resources, reduce duplicative services, and ensure more equitable distribution of resources across systems. This extensive baseline effort required the commitment of many non-grant resources and clearly demonstrates Virginia's leadership and interest in implementing a coordinated human service transportation initiatives.

The DRPT UWR inventory has also allowed the collection considerable information on cross-agency human service transportation destinations in each community throughout the state. The Commonwealth intends to enter these data into Global Positioning System software, with the help of resources from the 2006 UWR Virginia Implementation Grant. The DRPT intends to provide the GPS mapping information to local and regional human service agencies, stakeholders and planners, giving them an irrefutable, graphic tool of service redundancies to advance more coordination across human service agencies.

Implementation Grant: Program Goals and Activities for 2006

The Commonwealth proposes to continue its efforts to enhance human service transportation by utilizing the resources of implementation grant to complete the following four goals:

1. Widely disseminate current human service transportation efforts across agencies at the local/regional level: Baseline data will be converted to an effective local format accompanied by GPS data on all destinations to provide irrefutable evidence of overlap and redundancies in each local system. This goal shows the Commonwealth's interest in integrating technology to address the needs of coordination in human service transportation. All information will be reviewed and disseminated at the local level to encourage for local and regional coordination planning and action. The project will also forward information to agencies involved in

emergency preparedness to address transportation needs during natural or man-made disasters.

○ Activities:

- Obtain appropriate GPS software, complete programming and enter destination data for all human services agencies in Virginia.
- Create and mail effective local and regional reports
- Provide means for localities to use technology either on-line or by CD
- Disseminate/introduce widely through local and regional demonstrations at human services meetings and special sessions including emergency preparedness agencies.
- Encourage coordination planning across agencies using these tools (make access to federal funding contingent on coordination planning using tools)

2. Demonstrate models that work in Virginia: Select two localities/regions that will serve as pilot sites (based on results of coordination inventory and other information) to receive *mini-demonstration grants* to show effective human service coordination planning and implementation.

○ Activities:

- Review baseline data and examine findings from other recent studies conducted in Virginia¹
- Identify top communities (one rural; one urban) leading in transportation coordination planning and/or implementation in Virginia; Offer \$12,000 to \$15,000 mini-grant to: accelerate and advance regular coordination planning, bring in consultants and stakeholders for meetings, engage in emergency planning, buy or use technology, and to report findings at the statewide forum. (Communities will be selected based on multi-agency commitment outlined in a written proposal to DRPT).
- DRPT and other state agencies will monitor, participate and assist model demonstration sites during a six month period.
- Require demo sites to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts after 6 months using the UWR DRPT inventory and the Framework for Action
- Require demo sites to prepare report and presentations for websites, meetings and a State forum on transportation coordination (including evaluation results).

¹ Several major studies have also been conducted in Virginia during 2004-05 and their findings will also be explored to identify appropriate pilot sites. These studies include "Public Transportation for Elderly, Disabled, and low Income: Needs Assessment," Richmond MPO, Project Insight (Hampton area), Northern Virginia Senior Study.

3. Conduct a Statewide Transportation Coordination Forum- DRPT will organize and coordinate a state meeting to share information on model sites and other transportation coordination efforts, to update State Framework for Action, and to gain consensus on possible regulatory change and legislation recommendations. Special invitations to key stakeholder and consumer groups will extended (Lodging, travel costs, and honoraria will be provided to ensure strong stakeholder/consumer involvement).

○ Activities

- Organize, arrange Forum logistics.
- Invite all respondents to 2005 UWR inventory to a State Forum.
- Invite consumer stakeholders and national speakers on transportation coordination to Forum.
- Require pilot demonstration sites to present process and evaluation information.
- Gain consensus on the next evolution of the State's Action Plan including regulation changes and recommendations for legislation to advance human service transportation coordination.
- Devote a segment emergency planning efforts as a kick-off for more comprehensive efforts.

4. Promote Regulation Changes and New Legislation - Deliver recommendations to state agencies for regulation changes and suggestions to the Governor for an Executive Order advancing transportation coordination.

○ Activities

- Draft legislative recommendations and a plan for emergency planning efforts for persons who are transportation disadvantaged.
- Allow public and all stakeholders to review and respond to draft recommendations/revise as necessary.
- Present draft recommendations to Virginia's legislative Disability Commission.
- Disability Commission Chair requests that Governor issue an Executive order advancing agreed-upon level of transportation coordination.

See Timeline with deliverables on page 9 and 10.

Evaluation Summary:

The project will be evaluated in four ways:

- 1) The Demonstration Sites will use the DRPT Inventory and the Framework for Action as pre-/post- test instruments to evaluate changes in the level of human service transportation coordination before and six-months after the initiation of the mini-grants.
- 2) The participants in the State Forum will complete key questions from the DRPT inventory and the Framework for Action on coordination to ascertain change over time (2005 responses) from baseline data.
- 3) The conveners, stakeholders and other participants in the State Forum will agree on proposed State agencies regulation changes which can be modified for use as performance measures.
- 4) Successful outcomes related to regulation changes and the passage of legislation will be monitored and reported following the State Forum.

Itemized Budget:

Dissemination Activities	\$15,000
GPS website inclusion	\$10,000
Demonstration Activities.....	\$35,000
State Forum	\$15,000
Total	\$75,000

Budget Narrative:

Dissemination Activities. Local/regional baseline coordination reports will be printed and mailed to agencies across the Commonwealth and posted on multiple websites. GPS software will be purchased. DRPT will work with a statistician to program software for local/regional mapping in Virginia. All 2005 baseline data showing program destinations across the state will be entered into software program. DRPT staff will prepare a presentation of data and GPS system for local consumption and share widely at conferences, local and regional human service meetings, etc.

GPS website development/inclusion. The project's GPS mapping system will be included on multiple websites that are used by local and regional human service agencies, consumers and stakeholders.

Demonstration Activities. Two \$12,000 to \$15,000 mini grants to localities/regions to serve as pilot sites will be awarded. The pilot sites will use funds for meetings, outreach to consumers and stakeholders, cross agency activities and data system development, consultants, emergency preparedness planning, and systems development. Funds also available for DRPT consultant to monitor and assist pilot sites.

State Forum. Conference for statewide transportation coordination planning will be held using grant funds. Funds will be used to plan for forum and logistics, secure meeting place, continental breakfast/ luncheon, speakers, travel costs especially for stakeholders and consumers, printing, marketing, etc.

Timeline

Goals	Activities	Time-line	Deliverables	Milestone	Evaluation effort	Relation to State action Plan & Framework for Action
#1. Widely disseminate current state of transportation coordination at local level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPS software & data entry Create local and regional reports Expand technology for local use Disseminate at local meetings Encourage coordination planning w/ contingent funding Involve emergency preparedness agencies 	All activities to be complete in 1 st quarter of year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All human service program destinations entered into software GPS info placed on website or CD Power point presentation & demo of GPS info Minimum of 10 presentations disseminating local and regional info 	All agencies surveyed in the 2005 inventory acknowledge receipt of local/regional coordination reports and are aware of new GPS resource tool.	Following presentations, participants will complete a brief evaluation of the utility of reports and the GPS tool.	It was determined that transportation coordination in VA must occur at the Local level – local info was needed for planning.
#2. Demonstrate models that work in VA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify demo sites (one rural; one urban). Provide \$12 to 15,000 mini-grants to accelerate coordination. Monitor, participate and assist model demonstration sites during a six month period. Require demo sites to evaluate the effectiveness 	<p>Completed by 5th month of grant</p> <p>6th to 11th month</p> <p>11th month</p> <p>12th month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two sites will receive sub grants each from DRPT by subcontract DRPT and project staff will assist sites by attending meetings and arranging national speakers 	<p>PO developed</p> <p>Steering committees developed for demo sites/meetings held</p> <p>Pre-test/post-test completed</p>	<p>Sites will provide 2 quarterly reports on use of funds.</p> <p>Pre-test/post-tests compared.</p> <p>Stakeholders will evaluate process.</p>	Need to study and evaluate state models for replication

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demo sites will complete post-tests using UWR DRPT inventory and Framework for Action 	PPT's developed and reviewed	Forum participants will evaluate demo site presentations	
#3. Hold State forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite all respondents to 2005 UWR inventory. Invite consumers/stakeholders Invite national speakers using TA provided. Demo site make reports at State Forum and other venues Gain consensus on State's Action Plan including regulation changes and recommendations for legislation to advance human service transportation coordination. 	9 th month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitations mailed. Speakers secured. PPT presentations and handouts from Demo sites (previewed) 	Setting established with refreshments (arranged during 6 th month) Preview from Demo sites to DRPT and Interagency Grp. Demo sites present projects	Participants will evaluate effectiveness of forum and speakers.	To establish statewide dialogue that leads to effective action steps
		6 th month				
		12 th month				
		12 th month				
#4. Promote Regulation Changes and New Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislative recommendations Allow public review /input Present recommendations to Disability Commission Commission Chair requests an executive order 	11 th month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation submitted for public review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DRPT guidelines for federal funding changed to require coordination Stakeholder's receive copy of draft legislation and allowed to provide input. 	Monitor and record changes in regulations and passage of legislation after state forum.	State Action Plan includes regulatory and legislative actions.
		12 th month		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPT prepared PPT presentation scheduled and given. 		
		12 th month		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter developed from Disability Comm. Chair's signature to Governor 		
		12 th month				